1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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The individuals concerned in the polyandrous marriage at Henebedda are Handuna (8), the Vidane Appuhami (4), and Kandi (10)[1]. It will be seen from the genealogy that Handuna and Appuhami are the sons of a brother and sister, both have intercourse with Kandi, though the latter is nominally the wife of Handuna who is the older man. Kandi is an unusually pretty woman and considerably younger than either. We were told that Appuhami at one time lived with Badeni (11), his father's sister's grandchild, but was compelled to give her up on account of the jealousy displayed by Kandi.

We have already pointed out that a man spends much of his time with his father-in-law, i.e. with his wife's people, hunting and wandering with them and having perfect free access to his father-in-law's hunting ground and fishing pools; at Sitala Wanniya we were told that after a few days spent in a shelter on the territory in the man's community to which the bridegroom carried his bride on first receiving her, the young couple should return to the bride's group. Even at the present day this is the case to a great extent, though among settled communities as at Bandaraduwa there is a tendency for the women to come to the man's community and stay there with him[2].

Pregnancy is diagnosed after two menstrual periods have been missed. The change in the breasts is not noticed. Birth takes place in the cave (unless labour should come on suddenly and occur in the jungle); no screen is put up, and any woman will assist the parturient woman; the cord is cut with an arrow—the common tool used for all cutting purposes—and the afterbirth is thrown away. The umbilicus is treated with cloth and ashes, and the portion of the umbilical cord which drops from the navel is not preserved. We never heard of a case of twins.

During labour the patient leans back with one shoulder or

the Ordinance the name of the elder brother was given as that of the bridegroom, but everyone was aware that the girl would regard the other brothers as being equally her husbands."

[1] The numbers in parentheses refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Both *kema* and *diga* marriages occur among the pastoral Sinhalese but, according to Mr Bibile, *diga* marriage is the common practice.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at
843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *madu*, which fruits are
262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard
853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would
262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wanduru*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The
844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round
[184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's
262] flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be dangerously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirale* (devil dancer)
[165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who
834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa
551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[752] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

770 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the bowstring aiming in the air he did not loose his arrow. Soon he slipped down on one knee letting the other leg trail on the ground, and we were told that the wild boar had turned and charged him. Immediately one of the Vedda onlookers sprang forward and "medicined" the leg, that is to say, he wiped it down with a leaf as though he swept the pain from the leg to the earth, and the shaman, apparently cured, continued to hunt. Three times he shot at the *welemula* and hit it each time, then leaning back in the arms of his supporter he gasped: "I have shot the boar, now I am going." After more gasping and quivering he fell into his supporter's arms and the *yaka* left him.

After the ceremony all the food was eaten except the pumpkin which was left to rot on the *maesa*. Wannaku told us that the *yaku* would come and eat this, getting under the *maesa* and sucking the goodness out of it; the pumpkin would remain there and would look perfect, but should anyone cook it and try to eat it, he would find its substance was gone, so that it would be like trying to eat grass. As we asked to keep the bow and arrows, which would otherwise have been left to rot on the *maesa*, Wannaku sprinkled some water over them and muttered an explanation to the *yaku* before giving them to us.

THE PATA YAKU CEREMONY.

All Veddas recognise childbirth as a time of extreme pain and even danger to women, and the individuals of the Sitala Wanniya group invoke the aid of the *yaku* as soon as pregnancy is diagnosed[1]. A week before we arrived at Sitala Wanniya this ceremony had been held on behalf of Bevini, the wife of Vela, who did not appear to be at all far advanced in pregnancy. On the other hand, Mari, the wife of Pema, on whose account the Pata Yaku dance which we witnessed was performed, appeared to be quite six months pregnant. The delay had probably been caused only by the lack of the good things which it was necessary to offer to the *yaku* on these occasions, and both Pema and his father-in-law Nila seemed very gratified when

[1] We did not hear of this ceremony among the Veddas of any other group.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 796 we provided the rice and coconut necessary for the ceremony. This food is always eaten by the community after the *yaku* have inspected it.

843 796 776 The *yaku* invoked to ensure safety during pregnancy and childbirth are three in number and are called Pata (bark) Yaku. No story could be discovered concerning them, nor could any reason be elicited for the name Pata (bark) or the large quantity of bast which is used in the dance. This can be taken from any tree in the jungle, and is torn into strips about half-an-inch broad. It may, however, be suggested that these particular *yaku* require the *inner* bark of trees as a resting-place just as the *yaku* invoked to come to the *kolomaduwa* or *alutyakagama* come first to the leaves used in making these structures, and then may or may not enter the person of the shaman, while they may take refuge again in the leaves after they leave the shaman. In the instances cited the leafy structures were beaten with sticks after the ceremony to drive the *yaku* away; this ritual was not observed in the Pata Yaku ceremony, but it must be remembered that only three *yaku* were invoked and the shaman may have been thoroughly satisfied that they had gone away from the place, while, on the other hand, in the two other ceremonies we were told that hosts of attendant *yaku* rested amid the leaves, and that the more important spirits alone entered the persons of the dancers.

843 796 The properties used in the Pata Yaku ceremony held for Mari at Sitala Wanniya were as follows: three stout posts, which were thrust into the ground in a line; the tallest was about 2 ft 6 in. high and the shortest somewhat less than 2 ft, the upper ends of all being forked and large quantities of strips of bast lashed to them. These bast covered stakes are called [293] the *usmukaliya*, *medamukaliya* and *balakanna*, i.e. the high, middle and young post respectively, and each one belongs to one of the Pata Yaku. The *wilakodiya* or *kude* (umbrella), which belongs to all the Pata Yaku, is a similar bunch of bast strips tied to a rather longer stick which is not driven into the ground. The *amamula* is a stout stick about 18 inches long, to which bunches of bast are tied at each end and doubled back so as to present somewhat the appearance of a dumbbell. All these

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

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properties had been used previously in the ceremony performed for Bevini[1].

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Two dancers must take part in the ceremony, and one of them should be the woman's father, whether he be shaman or not; if the woman has no father, or if he is unable to dance, her paternal uncle or her husband may take his part. In the ceremony we witnessed Nila, the father of Mari, and Vela, who was no relation to her, both wore the *hangala*. Nila also wore wristlets and cross shoulder straps of bark which represented beads.

As usual all the women and children collected at one side of the cleared space to watch the ceremony, and Mari joined the other women in preparing the offering of cooked food. An arrow was struck (Plate XLV, fig. 1) in the ground beside the *usmukaliya*, and Nila, standing in front of the three posts, began an invocation (No. XXX) which was soon taken up by the other men. Nila salaamed, took the arrow out of the earth and began to dance round the three posts, and then in and out between them, without observing any particular order, holding the end of the shaft with one hand and the head of the arrow with the other. The usual steps and movements were performed, the knees bent, the body inclined from the waist and swaying to and fro, the arms with the arrow between them being moved to and fro, but not raised higher than the chest. Vela followed Nila closely; it appeared that he should have held an arrow, but not having one, he did the next best thing and pretended that he had one, holding his hands as though there was an arrow between them.

Suddenly when between two of the posts Nila dropped the arrow on the ground and leapt over it. Kaira, one of the onlookers, immediately picked it up and returned it to Nila. Nila then dropped the arrow between the other two posts and again leapt over it. This was repeated several times, Kaira always picking up the arrow and returning it to Nila, whose movements Vela imitated. Although we asked numerous questions as to the meaning of this figure no reason could be supplied, "Our fathers did it" was all the information we could obtain. The movements had gradually become quicker and

[1] See genealogy, p. 61.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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wilder till after a final leap between the posts Nila fell supine with outstretched arms, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers. The *yaka* of the high post now possessed Nila who, after a few minutes' immobility, began to shiver and gasp, then springing forward he danced to the posts with shuffling feet and head bent forward, and examined each one in turn. This he did by dropping his head on them so that his face was partly buried in the bast, his supporter always close behind him (Plate XLV, fig. 2). We were told that Nila was now possessed by all three *yaku*, who appear to have entered him as he bent over the posts. The exact moment of the entry and exit of the *yaka* into the person of the shaman was often very ill-defined, although in this instance, and indeed in most cases when more than one *yaka* was present at a dance, it was clear when the first *yaka* arrived, it seemed that the other *yaka* entered the shaman without giving any immediate sign of their presence.

The *yaku* speaking through Nila signified that they were pleased with the posts built for their reception. Then Nila picked up the *wila* and shouting, apparently with approval, held it up by each end and whirled the handle round making the bast strands fly out, then he approached Mari and waved it over her head and rested it there, so that her head was buried in the bast for several seconds while Nila predicted a male child (Plate XLVI, fig. 1)[1]. Nila then danced to Handuna and waved the *wila* over him. No particular reason was given for this, Handuna being no relation to the woman, but he was the most important old man in the community.

After covering Handuna with the *wila*, Nila danced wildly, always with the rapt expression of a man possessed by a *yaku*, showing his pleasure by holding the *wila* aloft and whirling it round and round. Then Nila put down the *wila* and took the *anamuta* and dancing with it in his hand he approached Mari stretching it out towards her, but he only stayed a few seconds and passed on to Handuna and falling on the latter's chest spoke and again foretold the birth of a male child to Mari.

[1] The sex of the child is determined by the position assumed by the strips of bast as they fall over the woman's head. If most fall over the woman's face the child will be a girl, if over the occiput a boy.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

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Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman buries his face in the *usmukaliya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250a]

Plate XLVI

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Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman predicts the sex of the child (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, Nila prays for his daughter's safe delivery (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nila exchanged the *amamula* for the *wila*, and coming to Mari again, raised the *wila* above her head and lowered it to the ground, letting the bast strips brush her face and body and then sweep the ground. This was done in order to wipe away the pain of labour. Then he leapt back to the centre of the cleared space and danced in and out between the three posts, hitting them with the *wila*. This was probably a sign of pleasure, for the driving away of *yaku* by striking their resting place would probably only take place at the end of the ceremony. He again approached Mari and fell back into the arms of his supporter, only remaining quiet for a few seconds until, trembling and gasping, he bent his head over the *usmukaliya* and buried his face in the bast. After doing this over each post he returned to the *usmukaliya* and said he must go, speaking in the usual husky and gasping *yaku* voice; then he fell exhausted into the arms of his supporter. All the Veddas now began to sing the invocation, and it was clear that the *yaku* had not departed from Nila for he soon began to quiver and gasp again, and sprang forward and danced between the three posts; then he began to search for something, lifting the strands of bast on the *usmukaliya*, and after an exaggerated pantomimic search he found the *wila*, turning this in his hands so that the bast swung at right angles, he waved it over each of the three posts; then turning to the *usmukaliya*, bent his head low over it and fell back exhausted. The *yaku* now left him and he recovered consciousness without any quivering or trembling, salaamed to the *usmukaliya* and sat down to rest. All the properties were immediately piled together under a tree. It may be noted that although Vela began to dance with Nila, he did not become possessed and so took no part in the latter portion of the dance.

After a short rest Nila went to the pile and holding a few strands of bast in one hand (Plate XLVI, fig. 2) repeated the following prayer to the Pata Yaku for his daughter's safety a number of times:—

Ané! mayé daruwata kisi antarāwak wenda epā mé wara.
Goda yanta denda ōnae.

Ané! (May) any harm not happen to my child this time.
(You) must permit (her) to land (i.e. to escape from her sea of troubles).

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 593 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 782 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 224 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 843 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas, in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.